

Listing of the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A gland plate comprising ~~a rigid, annular element, the element comprising:~~

a rigid, annular element comprising at least one two axially spaced, radially extending wall walls having a thickness of from about 0.1 to 4mm, the radially extending walls having a center orifice in the center of the radially extending walls and an outer circumferential perimeter extending around an outer edge of the radially extending walls; and

an outer wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls;

an inner wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the center orifice; and

at least one additional orifice formed in the at least one two radially extending wall walls between the center orifice and the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls and defined by an a first axially extending circumferential flange in one of the two radially extending walls and a second axially extending circumferential flange in the other of the two radially extending walls, wherein the first and second flanges are joined such that the first and second flanges extend around the at least one additional orifice and between the two axially spaced, radially extending walls.

2.-3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently amended) A gland plate according to claim [[3]] 1 wherein said element is a hollow structure.

5. (Currently amended) A gland plate according to claim [[3]] 1 wherein said element is filled with concrete, plastics or water.

6. (Currently amended) A gland plate according to claim 1 wherein said ~~at least one wall is~~ radially extending walls are made of metal.

7. (Currently amended) A gland plate according to claim 6 wherein said ~~at least one wall is~~ radially extending walls are formed by a pressing operation.

8.-9. (Canceled).

10. (Currently amended) A gland plate according to claim 1 wherein the gland plate is provided with one or more through holes formed by the at least one additional orifice.

11. (Previously presented) A gland plate according to claim 10 wherein each of said through holes is formed by a pressing or punching operation.

12. (Previously presented) A gland plate according to claim 11 wherein material displaced when each of said holes is being formed provides a strengthening support around said hole.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) A sealing arrangement, comprising:
a gland plate comprising at least ~~one~~ two axially spaced, radially extending wall walls having a thickness of from about 0.1 to 4mm, the radially extending walls having a center orifice in the center of the radially extending walls and an outer circumferential perimeter extending around an outer edge of the radially extending walls; and
an outer wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls;
an inner wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the center orifice; and

at least one additional orifice formed in the at least ~~one~~ two radially extending wall walls between the center orifice and the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls and defined by ~~an~~ a first axially extending circumferential flange in one of the two radially extending walls and a second axially extending circumferential flange in the other of the two radially extending walls, wherein the first and second flanges are joined such that the first and second flanges extend around the at least one additional orifice and between the two axially spaced, radially extending walls.

15. (Currently Amended) A mechanical seal, comprising:

a gland plate comprising a rigid, annular element comprising at least ~~one~~ two axially spaced, radially extending wall walls having a thickness of from about 0.1 to 4mm, the radially extending walls having a center orifice in the center of the radially extending walls and an outer circumferential perimeter extending around an outer edge of the radially extending walls; and

an outer wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls;

an inner wall extending axially and continuously between the radially extending walls and around the center orifice; and

at least one additional orifice formed in the at least ~~one~~ two radially extending wall walls between the center orifice and the outer circumferential perimeter of the radially extending walls and defined by ~~an~~ a first axially extending circumferential flange in one of the two radially extending walls and a second axially extending circumferential flange in the other of the two radially extending walls, wherein the first and second flanges are joined such that the first and second flanges extend around the at least one additional orifice and between the two axially spaced, radially extending walls.

16.-18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended - Withdrawn) A gland plate according to claim [[16]] 4 further comprising a means for feeding fluid through the hollow structure of the gland plate.

20. (Currently Amended - Withdrawn) A gland plate according to claim 19 wherein the means for feeding fluid through the gland plate comprises a sealed orifice formed in the inner ~~circumferential~~ wall, a sealed orifice formed in the outer ~~circumferential~~ wall and a pipe arranged within the hollow, annular structure and extending between the sealed orifices in the inner and outer ~~circumferential~~ walls.